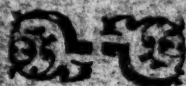


THE
GRAVE.
A
POEM.

BY ROBERT BLAIR.

The house appointed for all living. Job.

THE SEVENTEENTH EDITION.



GLASGOW,
PRINTED BY J. AND M. ROBERTSON.

MDCCKC.





T H E
G R A V E.
A
P O E M.

WHILST some affect the *Sun*, and some the *shade*,
Some flee the *city*, some the *hermitage*;
Their *aims* as various, as the *roads* they take
In journeying thro' life;—the task be mine
To paint the gloomy horrors of the *Tomb*,
Th' appointed place of rendezvous, where all
These travellers meet.—Thy succours I implore,
Eternal King! whose potent arm sustains
The keys of hell and death.—The GRAVE, dread
thing!
Men shiver when thou'rt nam'd: Nature appall'd
Shakes off her wonted firmness.—Ah! how dark
Thy long extended realms, and rueful wastes;
Where nought but *Silence* reigns, and *Night*, dark
Night,
Dark as was *Chaos*, ere the infant Sun
Was roll'd together, or had try'd his beams
Athwart the gloom profound.—The sickly taper,
By glimmering through thy low-brow'd misty vaults,
(Fur'd round with mouldy damp, and ropy slime)
Lets fall a supernumerary horror,
And only serves to make thy night more irksome.

Well do I know thee by thy trusty *Yew*,
 Cheerless, unsocial plant; that loves to dwell
 'Midst skulls and coffins, epitaphs and worms:
 Where light-beel'd *ghosts* and visionary *shades*,
 Beneath the wan cold moon (as fame reports)
 Embody'd, thick perform their mystic rounds.---
 No other merriment, dull tree, is thine.

See yonder hallow'd *Fane* :---The pious work
Of names once fam'd, now dubious or forgot,
And bury'd, 'midst the wreck of things which were :
There lie interr'd the more illustrious dead.--
The wind is up : Hark ! how it howls ! Methinks
Till now I never heard a sound so dreary :
Doors creak, and windows clap, and Night's feul bird
Rook'd in the spire, screams loud : the gloomy iles,
Black-plaister'd, and hung round with shreds of scut-
cheons
And tatter'd coats of arms, send back the sound
Laden with heavier airs, from the *low vaults*,
The *mansions* of the dead.---Rous'd from their
slumbers,
In grim array, the grisly *spectres* rise,
Grin horrible, and obstinately fullen
Pass and repass, hush'd as the foot of *Night*.
Again the screech-owl shrieks : ungracious sound !
I'll hear no more, it makes one's blood run chill.

Quite round the pile, a row of reverend *elms*
(Coæval near with that) all ragged shew,
Long lash'd by the rude winds. Some rift half down
Their branchless trunks: others so thin a top,
That scarce two crows can lodge in the same tree.
Strange things, the neighbours say, have happen'd
here:
Wild shrieks have issu'd from the hollow tombs;
Dead men have come again, and *walk'd about*:
And the great bell has toll'd, unring, untouch'd,
(Such

A P O E M.

(Such tales their chear, at Wake or Gossiping,
When it draws near to witching time of night.)

Oft, in the lone *charch-yard* at night, I've seen
By glimpse of moon-shine, chequering thro' the trees,
The *school-boy*, with his satchel in his hand,
Whistling aloud to bear his courage up,
And lightly tripping o'er the long flat stones,
(With nettles skirted, and with moss o'ergrown)
That tell, in homely phrase, who lie below.
Sudden he starts, and hears, or thinks he hears
The sound of something purring at his heels:
Full fast he flies, and dares not look behind him,
Till, out of breath, he overtakes his fellows;
Who gather round, and wonder at the tale
Of horrid *Apparition*, tall and ghastly,
That walks at dead of night, or takes his stand
O'er some new-open'd grave; and (strange to tell?)
Evanishes at crowing of the cock.

The new-made *Widow* too, I've sometimes 'spy'd,
Sad sight! slow moving o'er the prostrate dead:
Listless, she crawls along in doleful black,
Whilst bursts of sorrow gush from either eye,
Fast falling down her now untasted cheek.
Prone on the lowly *grave* of the dear *man*
She drops; whilst busy meddling *Memory*,
In barbarous succession, musters up
The past endearments of their softer hours,
Tenacious of its theme. Still, still she thinks
She sees him, and, indulging the fond thought,
Clings yet more closely to the senseless turf,
Nor heeds the passenger who looks that way.

Invidious *Grave*—how dost thou rend in sunder
Whom Love has knit, and Sympathy made one!
A tie more stubborn far than Nature's band.
Friendship! mysterious cement of the soul;

Sweetner of life, and folder of society;
 I owe thee much. Thou hast deserv'd from me,
 Far, far beyond what I can ever pay.
 Oft have I prov'd the labours of thy love,
 And the warm efforts of the gentle heart,
 Anxious to please. — Oh! when my *friend* and I,
 In some thick wood, have wander'd heedless on,
 Hid from the vulgar eye and sat us down
 Upon the sloping cowslip cover'd bank,
 Where the pure limpid stream has slid along
 In grateful errors, thro' the under-wood,
 Sweet-murmuring: Methought the shrill-tongu'd
Thrush

Mended his song of love; the sooty *Black-bird*
 Mellow'd his pipe, and soften'd ev'ry note:
 The *Eglantine* smell'd sweeter, and the *Rose*
 Assum'd a dye more deep; whilst ev'ry flower
 Vy'd with its fellow-plant in luxury
 Of dress. — Oh! then, the longest summer's day
 Seem'd too, too much in haste: still the full heart
 Had not imparted half: 'Twas happiness
 Too exquisite to last. — Of joys departed
 Not to return, how painful the remembrance!

Dull *Grave* — thou spoil'st the dance of youth-
 ful blood,
 Strik'st out the dimple from the cheek of *mirth*,
 And ev'ry smirking feature from the face;
 Branding our *laughter* with the name of *madness*.
 Where are the *jesters* now? the men of health
 Complexionally pleasant? Where the *droll*,
 Whose ev'ry look, and gesture, was a joke
 To clapping theatres, and shouting crouds;
 And made ev'n thick-lip'd musing *Melancholy*,
 To gather up her face into a smile
 Before she was aware? Ah! sullen now,
 And dumb, as the green turf that covers them.

Where

Where are the mighty thunderbolts of war?
 The *Roman Caesars*, and the *Grecian Chiefs*,
 The boast of story? Where the *hot-brain'd youth*,
 Who the *Tiara* at his pleasure tore
 From *Kings* of all the then discover'd globe;
 And cry'd forsooth, because his arm was hamper'd,
 And had not room enough to do its work?
 Alas! how slim, dishonourably slim,
 And cramm'd into a space we blush to name!
Proud Royalty! how alter'd in thy looks!
 How blank thy features, and how wan thy hue!
Son of the morning! whither art thou gone?
 Where hast thou hid thy many-spangled head,
 And the majestic menace of thine eyes
 Felt from afar? Pliant and powerless now,
 Like new-born infant wound up in his swatches,
 Or victim tumbled flat upon its back,
 That throbs beneath the sacrificer's knife.
 Mute, must thou bear the strife of little tongues,
 And coward insults of the base-born croud;
 That grudge a privilege, thou never hadst,
 But only hop'd for in the peaceful *Grave*,
 Of being unmolested and alone.
Arabia's gums and odoriferous drugs,
 And honours by the *Heralds* duly paid
 In mode and form, ev'n to a very scruple—
 Oh cruel *Irony*! These come too late;
 And only *mock*, whom they were meant to *honour*.
 Surely there's not a dungeon slave, that's bury'd
 In the high-way, unshrouded and uncoffin'd,
 But lies as soft, and sleeps as sound as he—
 Sorry Pre-eminence, of high descent,
 Above the vulgar born, to rot in state!

But see! the well-plum'd *Herse* comes nodding on
 Stately and slow; and properly attended
 By the whole fable tribe, that painful watch
 The sick man's door, and live upon the dead,

By

GRAVE.

By letting out their persons by the hour,
To mimic sorrow, when the heart's not sad.
How rich the trappings! now they're all unfurl'd,
And glittering in the sun; triumphant entries
Of Conquerors, and Coronation-pomps
In glory scarce exceed. Great gluts of people
Retard th' unwieldy show; whilst from the casements
And house tops, ranks behind ranks, close wedg'd,
Hang bellying o'er. But tell, us why this waste?
Why this ado in earthing up a Carcase
That's fall'n into disgrace; and, in the nostril,
Smells horrible?—Ye *Undertakers* tell us,
'Midst all the gorgeous-figures you exhibit,
Why is the principal conceal'd, for which
You make this mighty stir?—'Tis wisely done:
What would offend the eye, in a good picture,
The painter casts discreetly into shades.

Proud *Lineage*, now how little thou appear'st,—
Below the envy of the private man.
Honour, that middle-some officious ill,
Pursues thee ev'n to death; nor there stops short,
Strange persecution! when the *Grave* itself
Is no protection from rude suffrance.

Aburd to think to over-reach the *Grave*;
And, from the wreck of names, to rescue ours.
The best concerted schemes men lay for fame
Die fast away: only themselves die faster.
The far fam'd *Sculptor*, and the laurell'd *Bard*,
(Those bold insurers of deathless fame)
Supply their little feeble aids in vain.
The tapering *Pyramid*, th' *Egyptian's* pride
And wonder of the world; whose spiky top
Has wounded the thick cloud, and long outliv'd
The angry shaking of the winter's storm;
Yet, spent at last by th' injuries of heaven,
Shatter'd with age and furrow'd o'er with years,

The

A P O E M.

The mystic *cone*, with *hieroglyphics* crufted,
 At once gives way. Oh! lamentable fight:—
 The labour of whole ages lumbers down,
 A hideous and mifhapen length of ruins.
 Sepulchral columns wrestle but in vain
 With all-subduing *Time*: his cank'ring hand,
 With calm deliberate malice, waffeth them:
 Worn on the age of days, the brafs consumes,
 The bufto moulders, and the deep-cut marble,
 Unfteady to the fteel, gives up its charge.
Ambition, half convicted of her folly,
 Hangs down the head, and reddens at the tale.

Here all the mighty *Troublers of the earth*
 Who fwam to fov'reign rule thro' fea of blood;
 Th' oppreffive, fturdy, man-destroying Villains,
 Who ravag'd kingdoms, and laid empires waffe,
 And, in a cruel wantonness of power,
 Thinn'd ftates of half their people, and gave up
 To want, the reft: now like a ftorm that's fpent,
 Lie hush'd, and meanly sneak behind the covert.
 Vain thought! to hide them from the general fcorn,
 That haunts, and dogs them, like an injur'd gholt
 Implacable.—Here too the *petty Tyrant*,
 Whose fcant domains *Geographer* ne'er notic'd,
 And well for neighbouring grounds, of arm as fhort;
 Who fix'd his iron talons on the poor,
 And grip'd them like fome lordly beaft of prey;
 Deaf to the forceful cries of gnawing Hunger,
 And piteous plaintive voice of Mifery:
 (As if a *Slave* were not a fhred of nature,
 Of the fame common nature with his *Lord*):
 Now tame and humble, like a child that's whipp'd,
 Shakes hands with duft, and calls the worm his kinf-
 man;
 Nor pleads his rank and birthright.—Under ground
Precedency's a jeft; *Vaffal* and *Lord*
 Grolly familiar, fide by fide confume.

When

When self-esteem, or others adulation,
 Would cunningly persuade us we are something
 Above the common level of our kind;
 The *Grave* gainsays the smooth-complexion'd flatt'ry,
 And, with blunt truth, acquaints us what we are.

Beauty—thou pretty play-thing, dear deceit,
 That steals so softly o'er the *stripling's* heart,
 And gives it a new pulse unknown before,
 The *Grave* discredits thee: thy charms expung'd,
 Thy roses faded, and thy lilies foil'd,
 What hast thou more to boast off? Will thy *Lovers*
 Flock round thee now, to gaze and do thee homage?
 Methinks I see thee, with thy head low laid,
 Whilst, surfeited upon thy damask cheek,
 The high-fed *Worm*, in lazy volumes roll'd,
 Riots unscarr'd.—For this, was all thy caution?
 For this, thy painful labours at thy glass?
 To improve those charms, and keep them in repair,
 For which the *spoiler* thanks thee not. *Foul feeder*,
 Coarse fare and carrion please thee full as well,
 And leave as keen a relish on the sense.
 Look how the fair one weeps!—the conscious tears
 Stand thick as dew-drops on the bells of flow'rs:
 Honest effusion! the swoln heart, in vain,
 Works hard to put a gloss on its distress.

Strength too—thou furly, and less gentle boast
 Of those that laugh loud at the village-ring:
 A fit of common sickness pulls thee down
 With greater ease, than e'er thou didst the stripling,
 That rashly dar'd thee to th' unequal fight:
 What groan was that I heard?—Deep groan indeed!
 With anguish heavy laden; let me trace it:—
 From yonder bed it comes, where the *strong man*,
 By stronger arm belabour'd, gasps for breath,
 Like a hard-hunted beast. How his great heart
 Beats thick! his roomy chest, by far too scant

To give the lungs full play.---What now avail
The strong-built sinewy limbs, and well-spread shoulders?

See how he tugs for life, and lays about him,
Mad with his pain! ---Eager he catches hold
Of what comes next to hand, and grasps it hard,
Just like a creature drowning; hideous sight!
Oh! how his eyes stand out, and stare full ghastly!
Whilst the distemper's rank and deadly venom
Shoots, like a burning arrow, cross his bowels,
And drinks his marrow up.---Heard you that groan?
It was his last.---See how the great *Goliath*,
Just like a child that brawl'd itself to rest,
Lies still.---What mean'st thou then, O mighty
Boaster

To vaunt of nerves of thine? What means the Bell,
Unconscious of his strength, to play the coward,
And flee before a feeble thing like man;
That, knowing well the slackness of his arm,
Trusts only in the well-invented knife?

With *study* pale, and midnight *vigils* spent,
The star-surveying *Sage*, close to his eye
Applies the sight invigorating tube;
And, travelling thro' the boundless length of space,
Marks well the courses of the far-seen orbs,
That roll with regular confusion there,
In ecstasy of thought. But, ah! proud Man,
Great heights are hazardous to the weak head:
Soon, very soon, thy firmest footing fails;
And down thou dropp'st into that darksome place,
Where *nor device, nor knowledge* ever came.

'Here the *tongue-Warrior* lies, disabled now,
Disarm'd, dishonour'd, like a wretch that's gagg'd,
And cannot tell his ail to passers by.
Great man of language,---whence this mighty change?
This dumb despair, and drooping of the head?

Tho'

Tho' strong persuasion hung upon thy lip,
 And sly Insinuation's softer arts,
 In ambush lay about thy flowing tongue;
 Alas! how chop-fall'n now! Thick mists and silence
 Rest, like a weary cloud, upon thy breast
 Unceasing. — Ah! where is the lifted arm,
 The strength of action, and the force of words,
 The well-turn'd *period*, and the well tun'd *voice*,
 With all the lesser ornaments of *Phrase*?
 Ah! fled for ever, as they ne'er had been;
 Raz'd from the book of *Fame*: or more provoking,
 Perchance some hackney hunger-bitten *Scribbler*
 Insults thy memory, and blots thy tomb
 With long flat narrative, or duller rhimes,
 With heavy halting pace that drawl along;—
 Enough to rouse a dead man into rage,
 And warm, with red resentment, the wan cheek.

Here the great masters of the *Healing-art*,
 These mighty mock-defrauders of the *Tomb*,
 Spite of their *juleps* and *catholicons*,
 Resign to Fate. — Proud *Æsculapius'* son!
 Where are thy boasted implements of Art,
 And all thy well-cramm'd magazines of health?
 Nor *bill*, nor *vale*, as far as ship could go,
 Nor margin of the gravel-bottom'd *brook*,
 Escap'd thy rifling hand:—from stubborn shrubs
 Thou wrungst their shy-retiring Virtues out,
 And vex'd them in the fire: nor *fly*, nor *insect*,
 Nor wreathy *snake*, escap'd thy deep research.
 But why this *apparatus*? why this cost?
 Tell us, thou doughty keeper from the *Grave*,
 Where are thy *recipes* and *cordials* now,
 With the long list of *vouchers* for thy cures?
 Alas! thou speak'st not. — The bold impostor
 Looks not more silly, when the cheat's found out.

Here the lank-sided *Miser*, worst of felons,

Who

Who meanly stole (discreditable shift)
 From *back*, and *belly* too, their proper cheer;
 Eas'd of a tax, it irk'd the wretch to pay
 To his own carcase; now lies cheaply lodg'd,
 By clam'rous Appetites no longer teas'd,
 Nor tedious Bills of charges and repairs.
 But ah! where are his rents, his comings in?
 Ay! now you've made the rich man poor indeed.
Robb'd of his gods, what has he left behind?—
 Oh! cursed lust of gold; when for thy sake,
 The fool throws up his in'trest in both Worlds:
 First *starv'd* in this, then *damn'd* in that to come.

How shocking must thy summons be, O *Death!*
 o him that is at ease in his possessions;
 Who, counting on long years of pleasure here,
 Is quite unfurnish'd for that world to come!
 In the dread moment, how the frantic Soul
 Raves round the walls of her clay tenement,
 Runs to each avenue, and shrieks for help,
 But shrieks in vain!—How wishfully she looks
 On all she's leaving, now no longer hers!
 A little longer, yet a little longer —
 Oh! might she stay to wash away her stains,
 And fit her for her passage.—Mournful sight!
 Her very eyes weep blood;—and every Groan
 She heaves is big with horror.—But the *Foe*,
 Like a staunch murd'rer, steady to his purpose,
 Pursues her close through ev'ry lane of Life,
 Nor misses once the track, but presses on;
 Till forc'd at last to the tremendous Verge,
 At once she sinks to everlasting ruin.

Sure 'tis a serious thing *to die!* My soul,
 What a strange moment must it be, when near
 Thy Journey's end, thou hast the gulph in view!
 That awful gulph, no mortal e'er repass'd
 To tell what's doing on the other side.

Nature runs back and shudders at the sight,
 And ev'ry life-string bleeds at *sight* of parting;
 For part they must; *Body* and *Soul* must part:
 Fond couple; link'd more close than wedded pair;
This, wings its way to its *Almighty Source*,
 The Witness of its actions, now its Judge;
That, drops into the dark and noisome *Grave*,
 Like a disabled *pitcher* of no use.

If *Death* were nothing, and nought after death;
 If when men dy'd, at once they ceas'd to be,
 Returning to the barren womb of *Nothing*,
 Whence first they sprung; then might the *Debauchee*,
 Untrembling, mouth the Heavens:--Then might the
Drunkard

Reel over his full bowl, and when 'tis drain'd,
 Fill up another to the brim, and laugh
 At the poor bugbear *Death*--Then might the *Wretch*
 That's weary of the world, and tir'd of life,
 At once give each inquietude the slip,
 By stealing out of being, when he pleas'd,
 And by what way; whether by *hemp* or *steel*.
Death's thousand doors stand open.--Who could force
 The ill-pleas'd guest to sit out his full time,
 Or blame him if he goes?--Sure he does well
 That helps himself, as timely as he can,
 When able.--But if there's an *Hereafter*,
 And that there is, *Conscience*, uninfluenc'd
 And suffer'd to speak out, tells ev'ry man;
 Then must it be an awful thing *to die*:
 More horrid yet, to die by one's own hand.
Self-murder!--name it not: *our Island's shame*:
 That makes her the reproach of neighbouring states.
 Shall *Nature*, swerving from her earliest dictate
 Self-preservation, fall by her own act?
Forbid it Heaven!--Let not, upon disgust,
 The shameless hand be foully crimson'd o'er
 With blood of its own lord.--Dreadful attempt!

A P O E M.

15

Just reeking from self-slaughter, in a rage
To rush into the presence of our Judge;
As if we challeng'd him to do his worst,
And matter'd not his wrath — Unheard of tortures
Must be reserv'd for such : these herd together
The common *damn'd* than their *society*,
And look upon themselves as *fiends* less *fiend* —
Our time is fix'd, and all our days are numb'd;
How long, how short, we know not : — this we know,
Duty requires we calmly wait the summons,
Nor dare to stir till *Heav'n* shall give *permission* :
Like *Centries* that must keep their destin'd stand,
And wait th' appointed hour, till they're *reliev'd*.
Those only are the brave, that keep their ground,
And keep it to the last. To run away,
Is but a *coward's* trick : To run away,
From this world's ills, that, are the very worst,
Will soon blow o'er, thinking to mend ourselves
By boldly vent'ring on the world unknown,
And plunging headlong in the dark ; — 'tis mad ;
No frenzy half so desperate as this.

Tell us, ye *Dead* ; will none of you, in pity
To those you left behind, disclose the secret ?
Oh ! that some *courteous ghost* would blab it out
What 'tis you are, and we must shortly be.
I've heard, that souls departed, have sometimes
Forewarn'd men of their *death* : — 'Twas kindly done
To knock, and give the alarm. — But what means
This stinted charity ? — 'Tis but lame kindness
That does its work by halves. — Why might you not
Tell us what 'tis to *die* ? — Do the strict laws
Of your society forbid your speaking
Upon a point so nice ? — I'll ask no more :
Sullen, like lamps in sepulchres, your shine
Enlightens but yourselves. Well — 'tis no matter ;
A very little time will clear up all,
And make us learn'd as you are, and as close.

Death's

Death's shafts fly thick;—Here falls the village-swain,
 And *there* his pamper'd Lord.—The cups goes round;
 And who so artful as to put it by?
 'Tis long since *Death* had the majority;
 Yet strange! *the Living lay it not to heart.* —
 See yonder maker of the dead man's bed,
 The *Sexton*, hoary-headed chronicle,
 Of hard unmeaning face, down which ne'er stole
 A gentle Tear; with mattock in his hand
 Digs thro' whole rows of Kindred and Acquaintance,
 By far his juniors. — Scarce a *scull's* cast up,
 But well he knew its *Owner*, and can tell
 Some passage of his life.—Thus, hand in hand,
 The *fat* has walk'd with *Death* twice twenty years;
 And yet, ne'er *Yonker* on the green laughs louder,
 Or clubs a smuttier tale:—When *Drunkards* meet,
 None sings a merrier catch, or lends a hand
 More willing to his cup — *Poor wretch!* he minds not,
 That soon some *trusty Brother* of the trade
 Shall do for him what he has done for *thousands*.

On *this* side, and on *that*, men see their friend
 Drop off, like leaves in autumn; yet launch out
 Into fantastic schemes, which the long Livers,
 In the world's hale and undegenerate days,
 Could scarce have leisure for.—Fools that we are,
 Never to think of *Death* and of *ourselves*
 At the same time: as if to learn to die
 Were no concern of ours.—Oh! more than sottish,
 For creatures of a *Day*, in gamesome mood,
 To frolic on *Eternity's* dread brink
 Unapprehensive; when, for ought we know,
 The very first swollen Surge shall sweep us in.
 Think we, or think we not, *Time* hurries on
 With a resistless unremitting stream;
 Yet treads more soft than e'er did *midnight-thief*,
 That slides his hand under the *Miser's* pillow.

And

And carries off his prize.—What is *this World*?
 What? but a spacious *burial-field* unwall'd,
 Strew'd with *Death's spoils*, the spoils of animals
 Savage and tame, and full of dead men's bones.
 The very *turf*, on which we tread, *once liv'd*:
 And we that *live* must lend our carcases
 To cover our own offspring:—In their turns
 They too must cover *theirs*.---Tis here all meet:
 The shiv'ring *Icelander*, and sun-burnt *Moor*:
 Men of all climes, that never met before;
 And of all creeds, the *Jew*, the *Turk*, and *Christian*,
 Here the proud *Prince*, and *Favourite* yet prouder,
 His *Sov'reign's keeper*, and the *people's scourge*,
 Are huddled out of sight.—Here lie abash'd
 The great *Negotiators* of the *earth*,
 And celebrated *Masters* of the *balance*,
 Deep read in stratagems, and wiles of courts.
 Now *vain* their *Treaty-skill*:—*Death* scorns to treat.
 Here the o'erloaded *Slave* flings down his burden
 From his gall'd shoulders:—And when the cruel

Tyrant,

With all his guard and tools of pow'r about him,
 Is meditating new unheard-of hardships,
 Mocks his short arm;—and, quick as thought, escapes,
 Where *Tyrants* vex not, and the *Weary* rest.
 Here the warm *Lover*, leaving the cool shade,
 The tell-tale *Echo*, and the babbling stream,
 (Time out of mind the fav'rite seats of Love,)
 Fast by his gentle *Mistress* lays him down
 Unblasted by the foul tongue —Here *friends* and *foes*
 Lie close; unmindful of their former feuds.
 The lawn-rob'd *Prelate*, and the plain *Presbyter*,
 E'er while that stood aloof, as shy to meet,
Familiar mingle here, like sister-streams
 That some rude interposing rock had split.
 Here is the large limb'd *Peasant*:—Here the *Child*
 Of a span long, that never saw the sun,
 Nor press'd the nipple; strangled in life's porch.

Here

*Here is the Mother with her sons and daughters ;
The barren Wife : and long-demurring Maid,
Whose lonely unappropriated sweets
Smil'd like yon knot of cowslips on the cliff,
Not to be come at by the willing hand.*

*Here are the Prude severe, and gay Coquette,
The sober Widow, and the young green Virgin,
Cropp'd like a rose, before 'tis fully blown,
Or half its worth disclos'd.——Strange medley here!*

*Here garrulous old Age winds up his tale ;
And jovial Youth, of lightsome vacant heart,
Whose ev'ry day was made of melody, (Shrew,
Hears not the voice of mirth : The shrill-tongu'd
Meek as the turtle-dove, forgets her chiding.*

*Here are the wise, the generous, and the brave ;
The just, the good, the worthless, the profane,
The down-right clown, and perfectly well-bred ;
The fool, the churl, the scoundrel, and the mean,
The subtle statesman, and the patriot stern ;
The wreck of Nations, and the spoils of Time,
With all the lumber of six thousand years.*

*Poor Man—how happy once in thy first state !
When, yet but warm from thy great Mother's hand,
He stamp'd thee with his image, and, well pleas'd,
Smil'd on his last fair work.—Then all was well.—
Sound was the Body, and the Soul serene ;
Like two sweet instruments, ne'er out of tune,
That play their several parts.—Nor head, nor heart,
Offer'd to ache :—Nor was there cause they should ;
For all was pure within :—No fell remorse,
Nor anxious castings-up of what might be,
Alarm'd his peaceful bosom :—Summer seas
Shew not more smooth, when kiss'd by southern winds
Just ready to expire.—Scarce importun'd,
The generous soil, with a luxurious hand,
Offer'd the various produce of the year,
And ev'ry thing most perfect in its kind.*

Blessed!

Blessed ! thrice blessed days !—But ah ! how short !—
Bless'd as the pleasing dreams of holy men ;
But fugitive like those, and quickly gone.
Oh ! slippery state of things ——— What sudden turns,
What strange vicissitudes in the first leaf
Of *man's* sad *history* !——To-day most *happy*,
And e'en to-morrow's sun has set, most *abject*.
How scant the space between these vast extremes ?
Thus far'd it with *our Sire* :—Not long h' enjoy'd
His paradise.—Scarce had the happy tenant
Of the fair spot, due time to prove its sweets,
Or sum them up : when straight, he must be gone,
Ne'er to return again.—And must he go ?—
Can nought compound for the *first* dire offence
Of *erring man* ?——Like one that is condemn'd,
Fain would he trifle time with idle talk,
And parley with his fate.—But 'tis in vain,
Not all the lavish odours of the place,
Offer'd in incense, can procure his pardon,
Or mitigate his doom.—A mighty *Angel*,
With *flaming sword*, forbids his longer stay,
And drives the loiterer forth ; nor must he take
One last and farewell round.—At once he lost
His *glory*, and his *God*.——If mortal now
And sorely maim'd, no wonder.—*Man has sinn'd*.
Sick of his bliss, and bent on new adventures,
Evil he would needs try : Nor try'd in vain.
(Dreadful experiment ! Destructive measure !
Where the worst thing could happen, is success.)
Alas ! too well he sped :——The *good* he scorn'd
Stalk'd off reluctant, like an ill-us'd ghost,
Not to return ;——or if it did, its visits,
Like those of *Angels*, short and far between :
Whilst the black *Demon* with his hell-scaped train,
Admitted once into its better room,
Grew loud and mutinous, nor would be gone ;
Lording it o'er the *Man* : who now, too late,
Saw the rash error, which he could not mend :

An error fatal not to *him* alone,
 But to his future *sons*, his fortune's *heirs*.
 Inglorious bondage!—Human nature groans
 Beneath a vassalage so vile and cruel,
 And its vast body bleeds through ev'ry vein.

What havock hast thou made, foul monster, *Sin*!
 Greatest and first of Ills.—The fruitful parent
 Of Woes of all dimensions!—But for *thee*
 Sorrow had never been.—All noxious thing,
 Of vilest nature!—Other sorts of Evils
 Are kindly circumscrib'd, and have their bounds.
 The fierce *Vulcano*, from his burning entrails,
 That belches molten Stone and globes of Fire,
 Involv'd in pitchy clouds of smoke and stench,
 Marring the adjacent fields, for some leagues round,
 And there it stops — The big-swoln *Inundation*,
 Of mischief more diffusive, raving loud,
 Buries whole tracts of country, threat'ning more;
 But that too has its shore it cannot pass.
 More dreadful far than these! *Sin* has laid waste,
 Not here and there a *country*, but a *World*:
 Dispatching, at a wide extended blow,
 Entire *mankind*; and, for their sakes, defacing
 A whole *Creation's* beauty with rude hands;
 Blatting the foodful grain, the loaded branches,
 And marking, all along, its way with ruin.
 Accursed Thing!—Oh! where shall *Fancy* find
 A proper name to call thee by, expressive
 Of all thy horrors? Pregnant womb of Ills!
 Of temper so transcendantly malign,
 That Toads and Serpents, of most deadly kind,
 Compar'd to thee, are harmless.—Sicknesses,
 Of ev'ry size and symptom, racking pains,
 And bluest plagues are thine — See how the fiend
 Profusely scatters the contagion round!
 Whilst deep-mouth'd *Slaughter*, bellowing at her
 heels,

Wades

*Wades deep in blood new-spilt; yet for to-morrow,
Shapes out new work, of great uncommon daring,
And inly pines till the dread blow is struck.*

But hold.--- I've gone too far; too much discover'd
My Father's nakedness, and Nature's shame.
Here let me pause, and drop an honest tear,---
One burst of filial duty and condolence,
O'er all those ample deserts *Death* has spread,
This *Chaos* of mankind.--- O great *Man-eater!*
Whose ev'ry day is *Carnival*, nor sated yet!
Unheard-of *Epicure!* without a fellow!
The veriest *Gluttons* do not always cram;
Some intervals of abstinence are sought
To edge the appetite; *Thou* seekest none.
Methinks the countless swarms thou hast devour'd,
And thousands that each hour thou gobblest up;
This, less than *this*, might gorge thee to the full;
But ah! rapacious still, thou gap'st for more;
Like one, whole days defrauded of his meals,
On whom lank *Hunger* lays her skinny hand,
And whets to keenest eagerness his cravings.
(As if diseases, massacres, and poison,
Famine, and war, were not thy Caterers.)

But know, that thou *must render up thy dead*,
And with high int'rest too.--- They are not thine,
But only in thy keeping for a season,
Till the great promis'd day of *Restitution*;
When loud diffusive sound from brazen trump
Of strong-lung'd *Cherub*, shall alarm thy captives,
And rouse the long, long sleepers into life,
Day-light, and liberty.---
Then must thy gates fly open, and reveal
The mines that lay long forming under ground,
In their dark cells immur'd; but now full ripe,
And pure as silver from the crucible,
That twice has stood the torture of the fire

And

And inquisition of the forge.—We know,
 Th' illustrious Deliverer of mankind,
 The SON OF GOD, thee foil'd.—Him in thy pow'r
 Thou could'st not hold:—Self-wigorous he rose,
 And, shaking off thy fetters, soon retook
 Those spoils his voluntary yielding lent;
 (Sure pledge of our releasement from thy thrall!)
 Twice twenty days he sojourn'd here on earth,
 And shew'd himself alive to *chosen Witnesses*,
 By proof so strong, that the most slow assenting
 Had not a scruple left.—This having done,
 He mounted up to heaven.—Methinks I see him
 Climb the aerial heights and glide along
 Athwart severing clouds: but the faint eye,
 Flung backwards in the chace, soon drops its hold;
 Disabled quite, and jaded with pursuing.
 Heav'n's portals wide expand to let him in;
 Nor are his friends shut out; As some great Prince,
 Not for himself alone, procures admission,
 But for his train:——It was his Royal will,
 That where *He* is, there should his *followers* be.
Death only lies between.—A gloomy path!
 Made yet more gloomy by our coward fears:
 But not untrod, nor tedious: the fatigue
 Will soon go off.—Besides there's no by-road
 To bliss.—Then why, like ill-condition'd children,
 Start we at transient hardships in the way
 That leads to purer air, and softer skies,
 And a ne'er setting sun?—fools that we are!
 We wish to be where sweets unwith'ring bloom:
 But straight our wish revoke, and will not go.
 So have I seen upon a summers ev'n,
 Fast by the riv'let's brink a Youngster play;
 How wishfully he looks to stem the tide!
 This moment resolute, next unresolv'd:
 At last he dips his foot; but, as he dips,
 His fears redouble, and he runs away
 From th' inoffensive stream, unmindful now

Of all the flow'rs that paint the farther bank,
And smil'd so sweet of late.——Thrice welcome
Death!

That, after many a painful bleeding step,
Conducts us to our home, and lands us safe
On the long-wish'd for shore—Prodigious change!
Our bane turn'd to a blessing!—*Death* disarm'd
Looses her selfness quite.—All thanks to him
Who scourg'd the venom out. Sure *the Last end*
Of the good Man is Peace!——How calm his Exit!
Night-dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary worn-out winds expire so soft.
Behold him in the evening-tide of Life,
A life well spent, whose early care it was
His riper years should not upbraid his green:
By unperceiv'd degrees he wears away;
Yet, like the sun, seems larger at his setting.
(High in his faith and hopes,) look how he reaches
After the prize in view! and, like a bird
That's hamper'd, struggles hard to get away;
Whilst the glad gates of sight are wide expanded
To let new glories in, the first fair fruits
Of the fast-coming harvest.——*Then!—Oh then!*
Each earth-born joy grows vile or disappears;
Shrunk to a thing of nought.——Oh! how he longs
To have his passport sign'd, and be dismiss'd!——
'Tis done! and now he's happy!—The glad *Soul*
Has not a wish uncrown'd.—Ev'n the lag *Flesh*
Rests too in *Hope* of meeting once again
Its better half, never to sunder more.
Nor shall it hope in vain.—The time draws on,
When not a single spot of burial-earth,
Whether on Land, or in the spacious Sea,
But must give back its long-committed dust
Inviolate:——And faithfully shall these
Make up the full account;—not the least atom
Imbezzl'd, or mislaid, of the whole tale.

Each

Each *Soul* shall have a *Body* ready furnish'd;
 And *each* shall have his *own*.---Hence, ye profane,
 Ask not, how this can be?---Sure the same pow'r
 That rear'd the piece at first, and took it down,
 Can re-assemble the loose scatter'd parts,
 And put them as they were.---*Almighty God*
 Has done much more; nor is his arm impair'd
 Thro' length of days; And what *he can, he will*:
 His Faithfulness stands bound to see it done.
 When the dread *Trumpet* sounds, the slumb'ring
 dust,

(Not unattentive to the call,) shall wake:
 And ev'ry joint possess its proper place,
 With a new elegance of form, unknown
 To its first state.---Nor shall the conscious *soul*
 Mistake its partner, but amidst the Crowd,
 Singling its other half, into its arms
 Shall rush, with all the impatience of a man
 That new come home, who, having long been ab-
 sent,

With haste runs over ev'ry different room,
 In pain to see the whole.---*Thrice happy meeting!*---
 Nor *Time, nor Death*, shall ever part them more.

'Tis but a *Night*, a long and moonless *Night*,
 We make the *Grave* our *bed*, and then are gone.

Thus, at the shut of ev'n, the weary Bird
 Leaves the wide air, and, in some lonely brake,
 Cows down, and dozes till the dawn of day,
 Then *claps* his well-fledg'd wings, and *bears away*.

F I N I S.

